



1998 MILITARY REVIEW WRITING CONTEST

1ST PRIZE

Peacetime Leadership: A Critical Element of Combat Power

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US ARMY FIELD MANUAL (FM) 22-100, *Military Leadership*, has served the US Army well since its publication in July 1990. Its discussion of *Leadership in Principle*, *Leadership in Action* and *Leadership in Battle* provide the foundation for the “Be, Know and Do” required of every Army leader. Well written and easy to read, this manual helps leaders, primarily at company level and below, understand the expectations that both their seniors and subordinates have of them. It is battle-focused and provides many vignettes of successful combat leadership, mostly by junior US Army officers and noncommissioned officers (NCOs).

Although FM 22-100 has proved its worth through the actions of its practitioners in Kuwait, Rwanda, Haiti and Bosnia, it has several areas that need improvement. For instance, it does not adequately describe the nature of leadership challenges in “information-age warfare;” it lacks appropriate emphasis on specificity in junior leader actions; and while it is counterintuitive—it does not sound entirely correct to say the words—a shortcoming of the US Army’s basic manual on military leadership is that it is *too* battle-focused. While the vignettes and discussion of combat leadership dilemmas are both interesting and thought-provoking and should be retained in any revision, they do not reflect the gamut of challenges facing today’s junior leaders.

While developing moral, ethical and successful *combat leaders* is, and must remain, both the purpose and the end state of Army leadership doctrine, this doctrine must thoroughly address the *peacetime* development of combat leaders as well. Leaders are not exclusively developed in combat or during major collective training events such as combat training center (CTC) rotations—they are developed in the training room, barracks, motor pool and on small-arms ranges.

Exceptional leaders, such as those cited in the 1990 FM 22-100, did not simply *appear* on battlefields. They developed as leaders over years of hard, unglamorous work as peacetime soldiers in

[The Army] must sensitize its leaders to an emerging challenge—potential information overload. Junior leaders, those who ultimately make things happen, need to understand that an abundance of information is not necessarily a good thing—it may actually have a negative effect. TRADOC Pamphlet 525-200-1, Battle Command, characterizes this apparent dilemma: “The challenge of the future is not the availability of information; rather it is the proper organization and delivery of the information to the commander.”

preparation for a few critical moments in combat. General Sir James Glover summarized this point when he remarked, “A man of character in peace is a man of courage in war. Character is a habit. It is a moral quality which grows to maturity in peace and is not suddenly developed in war.”¹ General George S. Patton Jr. also succinctly captured this concept: “Battles take years to get ready for, all one’s life can be expressed in one little decision, but that decision is the labor of uncounted years.”² What FM 22-100 needs is more emphasis on the “labor of uncounted years” in times of peace that prepares leaders for the “one little decision” that can make all the difference on future battlefields.

What is Missing?

The 1990 FM 22-100 lacks a set of guidelines and questions that junior leaders can use to assess themselves during routine, peacetime training. As doctrine, FM 22-100 should not specify every tactic, technique and procedure (TTP) that prescribe “how to lead,” yet it should be specific enough to guide its target audience beyond understanding toward *routine application* of its principles. It should not attempt to provide “flow-chart” solutions to peacetime leadership challenges which will necessarily produce outstanding combat leadership when



A Command and General Staff College instructor provides direction during a PRAIRIE WARRIOR exercise.

As a Leader, you must do, "Provide Direction," an example of which is to set goals. A stronger example would be: Counsel with specificity—your soldiers and subordinate leaders can successfully tackle most challenges you give them if you specify what success is in PT, weapons qualification, vehicle maintenance and appearance, and so forth. . . . Knowing that leaders must provide direction and set goals is necessary but not sufficient guidance for leaders, who must consistently provide purpose, direction and motivation to their soldiers.

required. It should simply enable junior leaders to see if they are "leading" and preparing themselves to lead in combat or simply going through the motions. Paraphrasing the discussion of leadership—"the most essential dynamic of combat power"—in FM 100-5, *Operations*, the Army's fundamental leadership manual should provide more *direction* to its practitioners to complement both the *purpose* and *motivation*, which it already adequately supplies.³

Peacetime development of combat leadership. FM 100-5 makes the importance of peacetime training of leaders exceptionally clear—"No peacetime duty is more important for leaders than studying their profession, understanding the human dimension of leadership, becoming tactically and techni-

cally proficient and preparing for war."⁴ History has shown the wisdom of this philosophy. *Leadership in Combat: An Historical Appraisal*, a 1984 study conducted by the US Military Academy Department of History found that "a pattern of being able to adapt to changing circumstances had been developed in the successful leader by the time he was tested in combat."⁵ This study also found that "the most salient predictor of a successful combat leader was successful leadership in peacetime, particularly of a tactical unit" and that the leader "must have a well-developed and practiced ability in making decisions under pressure."⁶ These observations reinforce the imperative to maximize leader training prior to conflict.

The challenge of specificity. How often do leaders describe their last training event as "good training?" How often do junior leaders spend their day "checking training," how frequently are units "conducting maintenance" and described by their leader as "combat ready?" While these descriptions may indicate positive actions, they clearly lack specificity and require further explanation, frequently in the form of senior leaders playing "20 questions" with the leader who offered such general observations. Each of these descriptions has imbedded tasks, conditions and standards that must be understood by the leader making the assessment.

If junior leaders have difficulty in seeing themselves with the required degree of specificity, it follows that they will be challenged even more in determining a course of action (COA) when they encounter a challenge. If they do not have a clear and detailed picture of their unit's capabilities and limitations, it may be difficult for them to determine a feasible, acceptable and suitable COA to reach their objective—which also should be clearly defined if possible—for a given mission or event.

Simply telling leaders to "be more specific" does not solve the problem. Senior leaders must coach, teach and mentor their subordinates toward achieving the required specificity in their assessments of their units, their missions and their obstacles. A technique reinforced at the CTCs is the backbrief, which requires the subordinate to brief his superior on the mission he thinks he was told to do. It is simply a more structured method of asking yourself "so what?"—the same question leaders at all levels should frequently ask themselves.

While leaders must internalize leadership principles and values, they must act with specificity. In other words, the *be* and *know* of leadership may be somewhat general in nature, but the *do* must be focused on the issue at hand. An understanding and embodiment of leadership principles and the "Seven Army Values" may not provide enough focus for a



LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

BE As a Leader, You Must:		Examples:
Be a person of strong and honorable character	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Determination• Compassion• Self-discipline• Role Modeling	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Initiative• Flexibility• Consistency
Be committed to the professional Army ethic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Loyalty to the nation, the Army and the unit• Selfless service	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Integrity• Duty
Be an example of individual values	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Courage• Candor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Competence• Commitment
Be able to resolve complex ethical dilemmas	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interpret the situation• Analyze all the factors and forces that apply	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Choose a course of action that seems best for the nation
KNOW		
Know the four factors of leadership and how they affect each other	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The leader• The situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The led• Communications
Know standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sources of Army standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How standards relate to warfighting
Know yourself	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Personality and performance• Strengths and weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Knowledge, skills, and attitudes
Know human nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Potential for good and bad behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How depression and sadness contribute to fear and panic, and how fear affects performance
Know your job	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Plan and communicate effectively• Supervise, teach, coach, and counsel• Display technical and tactical competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop subordinates• Make good decisions that your soldiers accept• Use available systems
Know your unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unit capabilities and unit limitations	
DO		
Provide purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explain the "why" of missions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communicate your intent
Provide direction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Plan• Maintain standards• Set goals• Make decisions and solve problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Supervise, evaluate, teach, coach, and counsel• Train soldiers and soldier teams
Provide motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Take care of soldiers• Serve as the ethical standard bearer• Develop cohesive soldier teams• Make soldiering meaningful	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reward performance that exceeds standards• Correct performance not meeting standards• Punish soldiers who intentionally fail to meet standards or follow orders

Figure 1 Leadership in Action

junior leader to use in daily situations encountered without additional refined guidance. Values and principles are necessary but not always sufficient tools in the leader's toolbox. Field Marshal Erwin Rommel highlights the need for directed action: "One of the most important factors—not only in military matters, but life as a whole—is the power of execution, the ability to direct all of one's whole energies towards the fulfillment of a particular task."⁷ With minor modification, FM 22-100 can guide leaders toward more focused execution of their daily duties and better prepare them to lead in combat.

Leadership in action. The Army's leadership manual should explicitly and convincingly convey, to junior officers and NCOs in particular, that ultimately, *leading* is an action word—the *be* and the *know* enable the leader to *do*. The chart summarizing "Leadership in Action" in the 1990 FM 22-100 (see Figure 1) offers a useful framework for general discussion of leadership doctrine but lacks the specificity necessary to enable a leader to act.⁸ The "Leadership in Action" chart provides an overview of *be*, *know*, *do*, with examples of each. These examples may be sufficient for academic discussions at the Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course (BNCOC) or Officer Basic Course (OBC), but lack sufficient specificity for practical application—a junior officer or NCO cannot apply them directly next week at command maintenance or "Sergeant's Time" training. This should be neither a flowchart nor a recipe to a given leadership situation or challenge. It should, however, provide enough substance and detail for a leader to use as a foundation for developing a particular COA.

The chart states that "As a Leader, you must *be* a person of strong and honorable character, an example of which is "self-discipline." A more forceful example would read: *Be your own toughest critic; if your boss is routinely tougher on you than you are, reevaluate your standards and your commitment to attaining them.* Knowing that a leader should be of good character and have self-discipline is far too broad to be of any practical utility. Likewise, the chart also states that "As a Leader, you must *know* standards," examples of which are "sources of Army standards" and "how standards relate to warfighting." While neither of these examples is wrong, they do not provide anything a leader can readily use. A better example would be: *Learn the standards that apply to your unit. Get into the books and understand the standards in the mission training plan (MTP), applicable FMs, tactical standing operating procedures (TACSOP), operator's manuals (-10s) for assigned equipment and your command training guidance (CTG).* Knowing that there are many sources of standards

that relate to warfighting is too general to be useful to junior leaders.

Further, the chart states that "As a Leader, you must *do*, 'provide direction,' an example of which is to set goals. A stronger example would be: *Counsel with specificity—your soldiers and subordinate leaders can successfully tackle most challenges you*

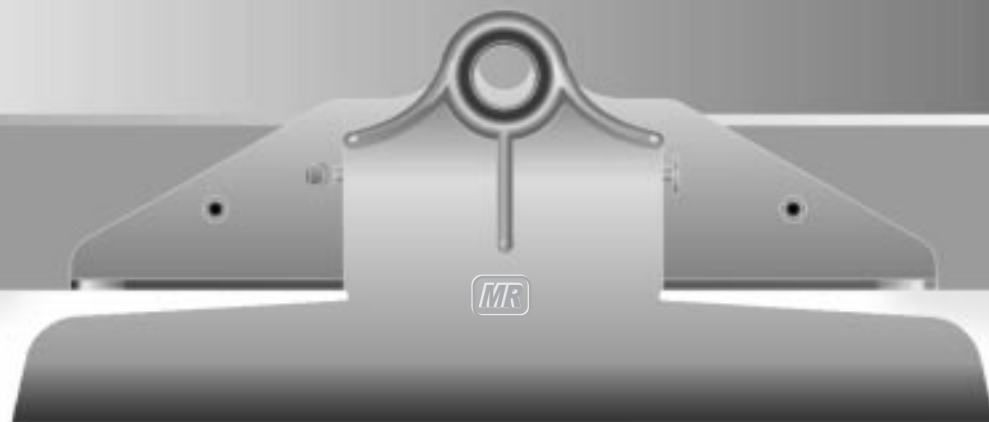
If junior leaders have difficulty in seeing themselves with the required degree of specificity, it follows that they will be challenged even more in determining a course of action (COA) when they encounter a challenge. If they do not have a clear and detailed picture of their unit's capabilities and limitations, it may be difficult for them to determine a feasible, acceptable and suitable COA to reach their objective—which also should be clearly defined if possible—for a given mission or event.

give them if you specify what success is in physical training (PT), weapons qualification, vehicle maintenance and appearance, and so forth. Ensure that this counseling directly supports the mission and is consistent with your CTG and quarterly training guidance (QTG). Knowing that leaders must provide direction and set goals is necessary but not sufficient guidance for leaders, who must consistently provide purpose, direction and motivation to their soldiers.

Recommended Solutions

A more usable version of the "Leadership in Action" chart is shown in Figure 2. "A Guide to Leadership in Action" helps focus on some of the action elements of leading that build "habits of leadership" which ultimately contribute to better combat leaders. The US Army ought to make it standard practice to print a "smart card" that summarizes the key points, focusing on action, of the doctrine it expects its leaders to implement daily—not as a substitute for, but as a supplement to, the basic manual. At a minimum, this should be incorporated into the Army's bedrock FMs on leading (22-100), training (25-100/25-101), and operations (100-5). "A Guide to Leadership in Action" can serve as a performance counseling tool, a self-assessment checklist or a page in a "leader's book."

Evaluation and counseling tools. The Army has several available counseling and evaluation tools that articulate specific, tangible and quantitative objectives for junior leaders and are tailored toward the peacetime development of combat leaders. These tools complement the doctrinal precepts of FM 22-100, but what is required is to better



A GUIDE TO LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

Influencing (communicating, decision making and motivating)

- Do not say: "can't," "never" or "impossible"—if it was easy, anybody could do it
- Understand standards—read the book (-10, MTP, FMs, TACSOP).
- Be your own toughest critic; if your boss is routinely tougher on you than you are, reevaluate your standards and your commitment to attaining them.
- Focus more on "how" and "how well" as opposed to "what"; take things apart & put them back together (what initiatives/innovations did you take?)
- Identify problems and solutions with specificity (who, what, when, where, why, & how).
- Avoid pronouns: "they (the staff/battalion) said . . ."—eliminate "20 Questions."
- Give "yes/no" answers to "yes/no" questions.
- Avoid superlatives unless substantiated by facts.
- Passion for job: care for soldiers/make decisions (chapters, retraining, etc.) as if your son/brother/best friend depended on it—someone's son/brother/best friend *does* depend on it (e.g., Would you want this soldier as your brother's section chief in combat?) In good units, soldiers go home tired (they earn their pay daily).
- Pride starts in the motor pool: it's where you & soldiers will spend the most time.
- Do not snivel, or permit an environment where others do so.
- Do not blame it on higher headquarters.

Operating (planning, executing and assessing)

- Leading is an action word.
- Do your homework: obtaining information is easy; applying knowledge is tough. Strive for excellence, but remember, if you can ensure that everyone in your unit simply meets the standard in everything, you will be a star (especially in maintenance).
- Start out each day working—get head in gear at 0600, not 0900.
- If you are simply doing what you are told to do, you aren't leading, you're an overpaid clerk.
- Develop & execute a PT straggler plan.
- 100% accountability (soldiers, equipment, training status), 100% of the time.
- Make training meetings and training schedules work for you.
- Be a technical expert on your assigned equipment (weapons, wheels, tracks, radios).
- Identify weekly & monthly objectives or end state for your unit.

Improving (developing, building and learning)

- Counseling, performance: base directly on QTG; counsel with specificity: your soldiers and subordinate leaders can successfully tackle most challenges you give them; you simply need to specify what success is in PT, weapons qualification, vehicle maintenance, etc.
- Personally check: "my chief told me" is not a substitute for your personal leader spot checks
- Do not invent too many new solutions to old problems.
- Build strong teams—you will be judged by the successes and failures of your subordinates.
- Convey to subordinates that most everyone they deal with is a "good guy" who is also trying to do his job to the best of his ability, and even "good guys" have different viewpoints, priorities or can be plain wrong sometimes.
- Leaders cannot check everything; therefore, have systems in place to ensure that everything gets done; empower subordinates & hold them accountable for results.
- ID two or three of the worst performers and take immediate, decisive action to make them perform or get out.
- Fight to "nest" training & other events to support your long-term goals & objectives—don't just check the block and move on to the next event.

Figure 2 A Guide to Leadership in Action

synchronize the doctrine with the primary tools in a unit for guiding it and coaching and evaluating subordinates' progress toward achieving competence.

The Officer Evaluation Report (OER) provides a positive step toward formalizing the degree of specificity required of leaders. The OER specifies nine leader "actions" divided into three activities—*influencing*, *operating* and *improving*.

- *Influencing* consists of communicating, decision making and motivating.

- *Operating* includes planning, executing and assessing.

- *Improving* includes developing, building and learning.

While officers are not specifically evaluated on these actions, their rater does indicate which of these actions most accurately characterize the rated officer.

The Junior Officer Developmental Support Form (JODSF) requires that the rater and rated officer jointly create a developmental action plan targeting the major performance objectives on the OER Support Form. Each of the nine leader actions must be addressed on this form, which is mandatory for lieutenants and warrant officer 1s (WO1s) and optional for all other ranks.

The NCO Evaluation Report (NCOER) requires specific bullets in the areas of: *values, competence, physical fitness and military bearing, leadership, training and responsibility and accountability* and offers some examples of each. The NCO Counseling Checklist/Record describes each of these areas in further detail and provides examples of standards for both "Success/Meets Standards" and "Excellence" ratings. Although somewhat lengthy, it is a good tool if the rater takes the time to read it and use it for its intended purpose.

Information-age leader challenges. As the Army publishes the 1999 FM 22-100 to establish

its leadership doctrine for the 21st century, it must sensitize its leaders to an emerging challenge—potential information overload. Junior leaders, those who ultimately make things happen, need to understand that an abundance of information is not necessarily a good thing—it may actually have a negative effect. The US Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Pamphlet 525-200-1, *Battle Command*, characterizes this apparent dilemma: "The challenge of the future is not the availability of information; rather it is the proper organization and delivery of the information to the commander."⁹

Information must be *acted upon* if it is to prove useful. Rommel, again, is instructive. He stressed that "Mental conception must be followed by immediate execution. This is a matter of energy and initiative . . . Whatever is attempted must be carried through. The young officer must understand at the outset of his training that just as much energy is required of him as mental ability."¹⁰

Leaders must attempt to maximize efficiency while ensuring effectiveness. This means keeping soldiers focused on doing the right thing while being as efficient as practicable. This will become increasingly important in information warfare. Faced with potential information overload, it is critical that leaders and their subordinates be able to rapidly distinguish between relevant and irrelevant information. Leaders must build units that are able to think and act rapidly to exploit opportunities that contribute to their mission. The window of opportunity on a 21st-century, high-tech battlefield will likely be short, so leaders must be ready to act immediately. As Napoleon intoned, "In war there is but one favorable moment; the great art is to seize it."¹¹ Leaders who can convey their vision to their soldiers will have the inherent ability to seize the favorable moment and act decisively.¹² **MR**

NOTES

1. GEN Sir James Glover, "A Soldier and His Conscience," *Parameters*, September 1973.

2. GSP Diary, 17 July 1943 in Carlo D'Este, *Patton: A Genius For War* (New York: HarperCollins, 1995), 501.

3. US Army Field Manual (FM) 100-5, *Operations* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office [GPO], 1993), 2-11.

4. *Ibid.*

5. LTC K.E. Hamburger, *Leadership in Combat: An Historical Appraisal* (West Point, NY: US Military Academy Department of History, 1984), 7.

6. *Ibid.*, 10.

7. *The Rommel Papers*, ed. B.H. Liddell Hart (New York: De Capo Press, 1953), 288.

8. FM 22-100, *Military Leadership* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1990), 53.

9. TRADOC Pamphlet 525-200-1, *Battle Command* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1994), 12.

10. *Rommel Papers*, 518.

11. Napoleon, *Maxims*, LXXXII, 1831.

12. Daniel S. Roper, "Vision and Willpower: The Essence of Leadership," *Field Artillery Journal*, August 1995, 8.

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